

OPIUS WESMAEL, 1835 (INSECTA, HYMENOPTERA):
PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF *OPIUS PALLIPES* WESMAEL,
1835 AS TYPE SPECIES. Z.N.(S.)2561

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Wesmael (1835, p. 115) described the braconid genus *Opius* with 36 included species, amongst which were the nominal species *Bracon carbonarius* Nees von Esenbeck, 1834 and the new species *Opius procerus*. He did not select a type species.

2. Haliday (1837, p. 204 and 1839, p. 61) was the first to designate a type species for *Opius*. Although the wording in Haliday (1837) ('Typum genericum praestabunt *O. carbonarius* atque proxime affinis') could be interpreted as ambiguous, the designation of *Bracon carbonarius* Nees von Esenbeck, 1834 by Haliday (1839, p. 61) is unequivocal. The subsequent selection by Muesebeck & Walkley (1951, p. 153) of *Opius pallipes* Wesmael, 1835 as the type of *Opius* was apparently based on the assumption that *carbonarius* was not an originally included species. Wesmael (1835, p. 153) had expressed some doubt that the specimens he referred to as *Opius carbonarius* were the same as *Bracon carbonarius* Nees. Haliday (1837, p. 219) had supported this by describing *carbonarius sensu* Wesmael as two different species, *Opius wesmaelii* and *O. sylvaticus*. However, since Haliday (1837, p. 218) also synonymised *Opius procerus* Wesmael, 1835 with *Bracon carbonarius* Nees, Article 69a (v) applies and *Opius procerus* should therefore be the type species of *Opius*. Thomson (1895, p. 2200) retained *procerus* as distinct from *carbonarius* Nees (apparently the only author to do so) by citing '*carbonarius* Hal.' in synonymy. He also accepted (p. 2202) Wesmael's 1835 interpretation of *carbonarius*.

3. Foerster (1864, p. 259) described the genus *Biosteres* with *Bracon carbonarius* Nees, 1834 as the type species. Ignoring Haliday (1837 and 1839), Foerster (1864, p. 261) used *Bracon pygmaeator* Nees, 1834 as the type species of *Opius*. Foerster's 1864 concept of *Biosteres* and *Opius* was followed by Marshall (1891, p. 284) and Szépligeti (1904, pp. 161–163). However, *pygmaeator* was only doubtfully included in *Opius* by Wesmael and therefore cannot serve as the type species.

4. Thomson (1895, p. 2175) and Viereck (1914, p. 21) accepted the type designation of Haliday and noted that *Biosteres* and *Opius* had the same type species. Gahan (1915, p. 66) avoided the problem by regarding most of the genus-group names used in the OPIINAE as synonyms of *Opius*. Gahan's 1915 treatment was used until 1959, when Fischer separated *Biosteres* from *Opius*. Fischer (1959, p. 1) accepted *carbonarius* as the type of *Biosteres* but defined *Opius* on the basis of Muesebeck & Walkley's 1951 designation of *pallipes* as its type species (see para. 2). Fischer's 1959 separation of *Biosteres* from *Opius* is similar to that used by Foerster (1864), since the type species

used for *Opius* by these two workers, *pallipes* and *pygmaeator*, are closely related (Fischer, 1972, p. 366).

5. Fischer (1971) lists 945 species under *Opius* and 88 species under *Biosteres*. Over 100 new species have been described in these nominal genera since 1971. Acceptance of *procerus* rather than *pallipes* as the type species of *Opius* would alter the current concept of *Opius*, as used by at least 17 authors in about 150 taxonomic publications since 1951, and resurrect a concept which has not been used since Thomson (1895).

6. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to set aside all previous designations of type species for the nominal genus *Opius* Wesm., 1835, and to designate *Opius pallipes* Wesm., 1835 as type species;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Opius* Wesm., 1835 (gender: masculine), type species by designation in (1) above, *Opius pallipes* Wesm., 1835;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *pallipes* Wesm., 1835, as published in the binomen *Opius pallipes* (specific name of the type species of *Opius* Wesm., 1835).

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